

Geraldine O'Neill was commissioned by the National Gallery of Ireland in 2015 to paint a portrait of the Hong-Kong-born fashion designer John Rocha.

Rocha has lived in Ireland since the late 1970s and was awarded a CBE in 2002. In O'Neill's full-length portrait, he is depicted informally in an interior setting that suggests a draped studio, consistent with O'Neill's

abundant paintings of brightly-coloured studio interiors, often warmly inhabited by family members. In this painting, O'Neill's characteristically robust structuring of space and her use of a muted colour palette is attuned to Rocha's minimalist sensibility. This mediates a conceptual alignment between divergent aesthetic agendas – linked to craft, surface and colour, as well as implied cultural transactions – that are highlighted through the depiction of Rocha's materials.

